AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1 - 35.   (Canceled)

36.   (New)   A game apparatus comprising:

a memory for recording a program that displays a plurality of playing areas on a game screen and processes a battle game in accordance with operating signals that are generated based on operations of a plurality of players, wherein each player is located in one of the plurality of playing areas; and

a CPU block for processing the game based on the program,

wherein the CPU block comprises:

a first means for validating a victory declaration flag when an operating signal makes a declaration of victory of one of the plurality of players operating the game in one playing area among the plurality of playing areas on the basis of said program and the player's operations;

a second means for nullifying subsequent operating signals input in the one playing area after the declaration of victory, until a game stage ends when the victory declaration flag becomes valid in the one playing area among the plurality of playing areas;

a judging means for judging whether or not to continue processing in one of the other plurality of playing areas when a declaration of victory is not made;

an executing means for repeatedly executing the first means and the second means in an unprocessed playing area when such unprocessed playing area exists according to the judging means;

a settling means for settling game points for a one of the players declaring victory when the declaration of victory is made;

a settling means for settling game points in the playing area operated by another one of the players who does not make a declaration of victory when the game is over; and

a determining means for determining a winner of the game based on the game points; and

a timer for measuring a duration of the game,

wherein the CPU block stops the timer in the playing area where the declaration of victory is made after the victory declaration flag is validated.

37.   (New)   The game apparatus according to claim 36,

wherein the battle game is a battle type dropping puzzle game displaying the plurality of playing areas so that displayed blocks move on the game screen by moving dropping blocks right or left in accordance with the operating signals generated by a player's operations in each playing area, and by causing blocks to disappear that meet predetermined conditions when they are landed and fixed, and

wherein the second means vertically drops the blocks and nullifies subsequent operating signals input in one of the plurality of playing areas after the declaration of victory until the game stage ends when the victory declaration flag is validated.

38. (New)   The game apparatus according to claim 36,

wherein the game points are determined in proportion to the duration of the game

measured by the timer.

39. (New)   A data processing method for a battle game using a CPU

block to process the battle game on the basis of a program, the method comprising:

displaying a plurality of playing areas on a game screen;

processing a battle game in accordance with operating signals that are

generated based on operations of a plurality of players in one of the plurality of playing

areas;

validating a victory declaration flag when an operating signal makes a declaration

of victory of one of the plurality of players operating the game in one playing area

among the plurality of playing areas on the basis of said program and the player's

operations;

nullifying subsequent operating signals input in the one playing area after the

declaration of victory, until a game stage ends when the victory declaration flag

becomes valid in the one playing area among the plurality of playing areas;

judging whether or not to continue processing in one of the other plurality of

playing areas when a declaration of victory is not made;

repeatedly performing the validating and the nullifying in an unprocessed playing

area when such unprocessed playing area exists according to the judging means;

settling game points for the player declaring victory when the declaration of victory is made;

settling game points in the playing area operated by another one of the players who does not make a declaration of victory when the game is over;

determining a winner of the game based on the game points; and

measuring a duration of the game with a timer, wherein the CPU block stops the timer in the playing area where the declaration of victory is made after the victory declaration flag is validated.

40. (New) The data processing method according to claim 39, further comprising:

displaying the battle game as a battle type dropping puzzle game including the plurality of playing areas where displayed blocks move on a game screen by moving dropping blocks right or left in accordance with the operating signals generated on the basis of a player's operations in each playing area, and by causing such blocks to disappear that meet predetermined conditions when they are landed and fixed; and

vertically dropping blocks and nullifying subsequent operating signals input in one of the playing areas after the declaration of victory until the game stage ends when the victory declaration flag is validated.

41. (New) The data processing method according to claim 39, further comprising:

determining the game points in proportion to the duration of the game measured by the timer.

42.   (New)   A computer readable medium storing a program executed by a CPU block and for executing instructions comprising the steps of:

displaying a plurality of playing areas on a game screen;

processing a battle game in accordance with operating signals that are generated based on operations of a plurality of players in one of the plurality of playing areas;

validating a victory declaration flag when an operating signal makes a declaration of victory of one of the plurality of players operating the game in one playing area among the plurality of playing areas on the basis of said program and the player's operations;

nullifying subsequent operating signals input in the one playing area after the declaration of victory, until a game stage ends when the victory declaration flag becomes valid in the one playing area among the plurality of playing areas;

judging whether or not to continue processing in one of the other plurality of playing areas when a declaration of victory is not made;

repeatedly performing the validating and nullifying steps in an unprocessed playing area when such unprocessed playing area exists according to the judging means;

settling game points for the player declaring victory when the declaration of victory is made;

settling game points in the playing area operated by another one of the players who does not make a declaration of victory when the game is over;

determining a winner of the game based on the game points; and

measuring a duration of the game with a timer, wherein the CPU block stops the timer in the playing area where the declaration of victory is made after the victory declaration flag is validated.

43.   (New)   The computer readable medium according to claim 42, the instructions further comprising steps of:

displaying the battle game as a battle type dropping puzzle game including the plurality of playing areas where displayed blocks move on a game screen by moving dropping blocks right or left in accordance with the operating signals generated on the basis of a player's operations in each playing area, and by causing such blocks to disappear that meet predetermined conditions when they are landed and fixed; and

vertically dropping blocks and nullifying subsequent operating signals input in one of the playing areas after the declaration of victory until the game stage ends when the victory declaration flag is validated.

44.   (New)   The computer readable medium according to claim 42, the instructions further comprising a step of:

determining the game points in proportion to the duration of the game measured by the timer.

45.   (New)   A computer program for executing instructions comprising the steps of:

displaying a plurality of playing areas on a game screen;

processing a battle game in accordance with operating signals that are generated based on operations of a plurality of players in one of the plurality of playing areas;

validating a victory declaration flag when an operating signal makes a declaration of victory of one of the plurality of players operating the game in one playing area among the plurality of playing areas on the basis of said program and the player's operations;

nullifying subsequent operating signals input in the one playing area after the declaration of victory, until a game stage ends when the victory declaration flag becomes valid in the one playing area among the plurality of playing areas;

judging whether or not to continue processing in one of the other plurality of playing areas when a declaration of victory is not made;

repeatedly performing the validating and nullifying steps in an unprocessed playing area when such unprocessed playing area exists according to the judging means;

settling game points for the player declaring victory when the declaration of victory is made;

settling game points in the playing area operated by another one of the players who does not make a declaration of victory when the game is over;

determining a winner of the game based on the game points; and

measuring a duration of the game with a timer, wherein the timer is stopped in the playing area where the declaration of victory is made after the victory declaration flag is validated.

46. (New)   The computer program according to claim 45, the instructions further comprising steps of:

displaying the battle game as a battle type dropping puzzle game including the plurality of playing areas where displayed blocks move on a game screen by moving dropping blocks right or left in accordance with the operating signals generated on the basis of a player's operations in each playing area, and by causing such blocks to disappear that meet predetermined conditions when they are landed and fixed; and

vertically dropping and nullifying subsequent operating signals input in one of the playing areas after the declaration of victory until the game stage ends when the victory declaration flag is validated.

47. (New)   The computer program according to claim 45, the instructions further comprising a step of:

determining the game points in proportion to the duration of the game measured by the timer.